

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 25 JUNE 2014

Present:

Councillor Haynes (in the Chair)

Councillors

Benson	I Coleman	Hunter	Rowson
Blackburn	Collett	Hutton	Ryan
Brown	Cox	Jackson	Smith
Cain	Cross	Mrs Jackson	Stansfield
Callow	Mrs Delves	Jones	Taylor
Mrs Callow JP	Doherty	Matthews	Mrs Taylor
Campbell	Elmes	H Mitchell	Williams
Clapham	Galley	M Mitchell	Wright
D Coleman	Green	O'Hara	
G Coleman	Mrs Henderson MBE	Owen	

In Attendance:

Neil Jack, Chief Executive
John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services
Alan Cavill, Director of Place
Delyth Curtis, Director of Adult Services
Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health
Steve Thompson, Director of Resources
Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Regulatory Services
Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance
Yvonne Burnett, Democratic Projects Officer

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 12TH MAY 2014

Resolved: That the minutes of the Council held on 12 May 2014 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

3 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor welcomed the three new Councillors following the by-elections in Hawes Side, Layton, Talbot wards: Councillors Kath Benson, Ian Coleman and Mrs Pam Jackson.

Councillor Cain and Mr Alan Cavill, Director of Place, were congratulated by the Mayor for the fantastic opening night of the production Mamma Mia!.

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The Mayor also congratulated Mr Michael Flynn on winning the North West Adult Learner of the Year award and presented him with the award. Councillor Taylor, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, also acknowledged Michael's achievement.

4 MINUTE'S SILENCE

Councillors observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect to former Mayor and Councillor, Mrs Joan Greenhalgh who sadly died on Thursday 29th May and former Chief Executive, Steve Weaver who sadly died on Wednesday 28th May 2014.

5 COUNCILLOR MRS JOAN GREENHALGH

Following the sad loss of Councillor Mrs Joan Greenhalgh, the Council was invited to pay tribute to her life and work and consider a resolution of condolence.

Motion: Councillor Jackson proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

'This Council and the people of Blackpool were deeply saddened to learn of the death on Thursday 29th May 2014 of Councillor Joan Greenhalgh, former Mayor of the Borough in 2011-2012 and member for Clifton Ward.

Joan was born in Blackpool in 1931 and attended Stanley Primary School, St John Vianney and later Tyldesley Secondary School.

She started her professional career at Stansfield's office and trained as a secretary at college.

In her younger days she was also a professional dancer. She had travelled extensively in Russia and was in Kiev during the Chernobyl disaster in 1986.

Joan started her political career when she was elected as Councillor for the Clifton Ward in September 1992 and she has represented the ward ever since. She was very involved in the community even before becoming a councillor and loved the area.

She was also a Director and valued Board member of Blackpool Coastal Housing until 2010 and was Chairman of the Blackpool Co-operative Women's Guild.

Her interests included the Little Marton Windmill and she was a founder member of the former Labour Club on Langdale Road, Mereside. She was a governor of Baines Endowed C of E Primary School and Mereside Primary School for many years.

She has served on a variety of Council Committees over the years. In particular her interests were around the Licensing and Public Protection Committees and became an experienced and valued member of those committees.

Her proudest moment was becoming Mayor for the 2011/ 2012 Municipal year and showed true spirit to represent the Borough for that 12 month period.

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Sadly Joan suffered a second stroke recently, following her first stroke in 2010 but this time did not recover.

Joan leaves her two children, Pat, who was her Mayoress during her mayoral year and Richard and her two grandchildren, Harry and Amber.

Our deepest sympathy goes out to Pat, Richard and their families in their great loss.'

Councillors Williams, Green and Mrs Henderson also paid tribute to Councillor Mrs Greenhalgh.

Motion carried: The motion on being submitted to the Council was carried unanimously.

6 MR STEVE WEAVER

Following the sad death of Mr Steve Weaver, former Chief Executive of the Council, the Council was invited to pay tribute to Mr Weaver and consider a resolution of condolence.

Motion: Councillor Taylor proposed (and Councillor Callow seconded):

'This Council, members, officers and the people of Blackpool were deeply saddened to learn of the death on Wednesday 28th May 2014 of Steve Weaver, former Chief Executive of the Council who served from 2002 to 2011. Steve was tragically killed in a cycling accident in France where he was living and our heartfelt condolences go to Steve's family, in particular his children Ruth, Christopher and Ben and grandchildren and close friends at this time.

Steve was born in 1950 and attended Sheffield University where he gained a BA Hons 2:1 Geography and Geology. After University he joined Lancashire County Council where he worked as a Lecturer in Field Studies until 1974.

He then joined Blackburn Council in 1974 where he had a number of jobs starting as a Town Planner, then rising to Head of Policy and Co-ordination in 1987. He was seconded to Blackburn City Challenge Partnership where he was appointed as Deputy Chief Executive in 1993 before returning to the Council in 1994 and was then appointed as Executive Director in 1997. By the end of his time at Blackburn he held the position of Deputy Chief Executive.

Some of Steve's achievements whilst at Blackburn included the creation of a public private partnership for the delivery of a wide range of Council support services with Capita plc, the successful stock transfer of 10,000 Council houses to a new not for profit housing company. An achievement he also undertook with Blackpool in 2006 with the formation of Blackpool Coastal Housing. He also led major successful regeneration initiatives and led the team responsible for winning the case for Blackburn with Darwen, (as the Council then become) to become a unitary authority. This was at a time when Steve first came to Blackpool's attention and he worked with officers and members in helping both Councils achieve this unique status.

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Following the retirement of Graham Essex Crosby, he was appointed as Chief Executive with Blackpool Council on 1 April 2002.

Steve's time with Blackpool was indeed transformational. He brought a new approach to the ownership of commercial assets for example Blackpool Airport's sale to Marr Properties; a new future for Blackpool Zoo by leasing it to Parques Reunidos leading to over £10m of new investment and a new future for Sandcastle Waterpark leading to almost £10m of investment and more than doubling its patronage by bringing it back under Council control.

During the 10 years prior to 2002, the Council had received around £22m in Government grants for regeneration, in the 10 years since that date the Council received around £300 million in grants for regeneration. This has delivered the new seafront, town centre public realm, tramway and central corridor.

He also helped lead initiatives around the development of the Houndshell Shopping Centre, fostered a new approach to roads maintenance, developed a much more customer focused service from the Council and a tripled the number of health and leisure assets available to the people of Blackpool.

One of his legacies which is now coming to fruition is the Central Business District/ Talbot Gateway and it is fitting that in his memory the Council will name the road which runs adjacent to Bickerstaffe House as 'Weaver Way', as a serving reminder of his contribution to Blackpool.

Steve had a particular love of Blackpool and its heritage, ensuring that the town was placed on the map for fantastic events such as Showzam, the Fireworks and the Tour of Britain cycling.

He also led the bold move to purchase the town's key leisure assets, the Tower and the Winter Gardens and ensure that they were to be restored to their former glory but in a sustainable way. In a fitting tribute to Steve there will be a re-print of the Winter Gardens book with a dedication to Steve within it.

Always willing to do anything for charity he has carried out some spectacular sacrifices in the pursuit of sponsorship. He completed the tower to tower (Eiffel to Blackpool) bike ride and agreed to have his head shaved for Comic Relief.

During his tenure with Blackpool he worked under two different political administrations and seamlessly worked with political leaders to help work for the good of Blackpool. He was greatly admired by politicians in all parties.

Steve was a unique individual who served Blackpool tremendously and who will be greatly missed by everyone who knew him.'

Councillors Green, Mrs Jackson and Blackburn also paid tribute to Steve Weaver.

Motion carried: The motion on being submitted to the Council was carried unanimously.

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7 EXECUTIVE REPORTS

The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members presented reports to the Council on work undertaken within their portfolio areas. All the reports covered decisions taken, work in progress and work to be undertaken in the near future. Questions, comments and debate were invited from all councillors on each of the report areas.

Notes:

(1) Councillor Jackson agreed to provide Councillor Clapham with confirmation of the location(s) of the short-term pollution signs, which would advise the public when bathing was not advisable due to adverse weather conditions. He also agreed to provide Councillor Green with further details of the agenda content and the actions that had been agreed at the Blackpool Business Leadership Group meeting held in May.

(2) In response to a request from Councillor Mrs Callow regarding the recently trialled telephone call blocking system, Councillor Campbell agreed to confirm whether members of the public were able to purchase the devices. Councillor Campbell also agreed to look into the availability of geographical meetings to allow police representatives to provide the community and councillors with policing updates.

(3) Councillor Jones agreed to provide a response to Councillor Galley in relation to the reported fault on the lighting columns between Central and North pier, with details of the enforcement of the contract and any associated penalties. He also agreed to provide details for Councillor Galley regarding the progress of the implementation of the Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) software that enabled remote management of the traffic flow system as part of the PFI Traffic Signals project.

(4) In response to the request from Councillor Galley, Councillor Wright agreed to provide details of the cost to run the Grundy Art Gallery and visitor numbers for the last five years.

Note: Councillors Mrs Henderson and H Mitchell left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

8 REVENUE BUDGET SAVINGS 2014/ 2015

The Council considered the recommendations of the Executive from its meeting on 19 May 2014, in relation to a replacement option for savings identified in the Revenue Budget for 2014/15.

Members were aware that at the Budget Council meeting in February 2014, the Chief Executive had been given delegated authority to deliver the £1.6 million staffing savings and that consultation had been taking place in relation to the proposed changes in staff terms and conditions for a period of 24 months, which at that time related to five days' unpaid leave per year and an increment freeze. It was noted that through voluntary acceptance of unpaid leave, the required savings in this respect had been achieved although the Trade Unions would not enter into a collective agreement in relation to the increment freeze. Therefore a pay freeze for period of two years was being proposed as an alternative.

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Members also noted that a £600,000 saving would be met from a review of the Council's senior management structure and from procurement savings.

Motion: Councillor Blackburn proposed (and Councillor Jackson seconded):

'To agree that the £1.6 million savings identified in the approved Revenue Budget for an increment freeze for staff for 2014/ 2015, be replaced by the proposals set out at paragraphs 5.1 and 5.4 of the report to the Executive on 19 May 2014 and that the proposed pay freeze referred to in paragraph 5.1 of that report apply for 24 months.'

Motion carried: The motion on being submitted to the Council was carried.

9 CORE STRATEGY

Members considered the recommendations from the Executive from its meeting on 16 June 2014 on the Core Strategy, that proposed where new developments should be located in Blackpool, identified which areas would be regenerated, protected or enhanced and set out key development principles such as design and affordable housing. It was noted that the Core Strategy was a key planning document for Blackpool and would be used to determine planning applications within the Borough.

The report also set out proposals for an eight week consultation period during which representations would be invited on the Proposed Submission Core Strategy, after which the Strategy and supporting documents would be submitted to the Secretary of State.

Motion: Councillor Jackson proposed (and Councillor Blackburn seconded):

'1. To approve the Proposed Submission Core Strategy (Appendix 2a Part 1 to the Executive report) including the evidence base listed in the plan; amendments to the Policies Map (Appendix 2a Part 1 of the Executive report); Statement of Consultation (Appendix 2c Part 1 of the Executive report) including the responses to the representations received to the Revised Preferred Option (May 2012); Sustainability Appraisal (Appendix 2d Part 1 of the Executive report) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (Appendix 2e of the Executive report) for publication and subsequent submission to the Secretary of State.

2. That should the person appointed to carry out the examination consider that the circumstances are as described in s20(7B) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, to formally request that s/he recommend any necessary modifications to the Plan to make the Plan satisfy the appropriate requirements and sound, pursuant to section 20 (7C) of the 2004 Act.

3. That the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Urban Regeneration, be given delegated authority to propose minor amendments to improve the clarity of the documentation referred to under recommendation 1 above and which do not alter the substance of the document when submitting the Plan to the Secretary of State (these amendments will be highlighted) and during the Examination process.

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4. To approve the draft Statement of Compliance (Appendix 2j to the Executive report) for consultation alongside publication of the Proposed Submission Core Strategy; that the Head of Planning and Strategic Housing, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Urban Regeneration, be given delegated authority to make any amendments to the Statement of Compliance where necessary in response to representations received; and to publish the final version as an evidence base document to the Core Strategy.

5. To agree that the Proposed Submission Core Strategy housing requirement figure (set out in Policy CS2) be used to calculate the five-year housing land supply pending adoption of the Core Strategy.'

Motion carried: The motion on being submitted to the Council was carried.

10 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

Members were aware that following the Annual Council meeting on 12th May 2014, it had been agreed that following the election of three councillors at the by-election on 22nd May 2014, a review of the political balance calculations and their effect on committees would be required.

The Council considered proposals for political balance calculations which also took into account the sad death of Councillors Mrs Greenhalgh, and noted that a further review would be required at the September Council meeting, following the Clifton by-election.

Motion: Councillor Blackburn proposed (and Councillor Jackson seconded):

'1. To re-appoint the following committees, in line with the political balance calculations and adjustments at Appendix 10(a) to the Council report. These are:

- Scrutiny Committee (membership of fourteen and with a composition of nine Labour and five Conservative)
- Health Scrutiny Committee (membership of nine and with a composition of six Labour and three Conservative)
- Planning Committee (membership of nine and with a composition of six Labour and three Conservative)
- Appeals Committee (membership of six and with a composition of four Labour and two Conservative)
- Finance and Audit Committee (membership of seven and with a composition of five Labour and two Conservative).
- Standards Committee (membership of six and with a composition of four Labour and two Conservative).
- Chief Officers Employment Committee (membership of six and with a composition of four Labour and two Conservative).

2. To agree that the powers and duties of the committees remain as set out in the Constitution.

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3. That the Licensing Committee also be re-appointed with the powers and duties as set out in the Constitution (membership of fifteen and a composition of ten Labour, four Conservative and one Liberal Democrat).
4. That the Licensing Committee be requested to re-appoint the Public Protection Sub-Committee, with the powers and duties, as set out in the Constitution (membership of seven and with a composition of five Labour and two Conservative).
5. That the Scrutiny Committee be requested to appoint a 'Call In' Sub Committee, (membership of nine and with a composition of six Labour and three Conservative), to meet as and when required, with the powers and duties, as set out in the Constitution.
6. That the Licensing Committee also be re-appointed with the powers and duties as set out in the Constitution (membership of fifteen and a composition of ten Labour, four Conservative and one Liberal Democrat).
7. To note the appointment of members to Committees as set out in Appendix 10(b) to the Council report.
8. To confirm the re-appointment of the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen for those Committees and the six Scrutiny Lead Members identified at Appendix 10(b) to the Council report, based on the above recommendations.
9. To agree that the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to amend the Constitution accordingly and report back to Council on revised political balance calculations at the September meeting following the Clifton By Election.'

Motion carried: The motion on being submitted to the Council was carried.

Note: Councillor Green left the meeting following consideration of the above item.

11 WORKING APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

Motion: Pursuant to notice, Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Jackson seconded):

'Council is asked to endorse a proposal that Jobs Seekers Allowance currently being paid to young individuals should be paid direct to employers who would then make up the difference to the living wage and they would also provide a working career apprenticeship to these young unemployed individuals. The initiative would be aimed at employers who are currently trading in craft skills such as electricians, mechanics, engineers, plumbers, heating engineers etc. Not only would the initiative provide a fulltime apprenticeship for the young unemployed, lasting up to four years, it would provide them with life long skills ensuring continued employment and income. For the employer it would provide a cost effective way of expanding their own workforce enabling them to handle more work and larger projects. Council therefore requests the Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister in support of such a scheme and recommends that it be formally considered by Central Government.'

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Motion carried: The motion on being submitted to the Council was carried.

Mayor

(The meeting ended at 9.21 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:

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